

ABSTRACT

Portable measuring devices which communicate by low power transceivers through a communication controller with a printer device collect weight and size data on articles to be shipped. The collected weight and size data are combined with origin and destination data, and labels are printed bearing pertinent shipping and routing information in machine readable format. The labels are attached to the articles to be shipped and accompany the articles to their respective destinations. At transfer points the labels are read by scanner devices which also communicate by low power transceiver links with the communication controller. The wireless linking of the scanner devices promotes human safety by the absence of cords which could cause entanglement of an operator in mechanized conveying equipment. The communication controllers at each stage of the shipping process have the capability of transferring received and updated status information on the shipped articles to a central data station.